

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Original): Assay for identifying an agent that modulates the interaction of interleukin-23 and/or interleukin-12 with a corresponding receptor thereof comprising

- a) contacting interleukin-23 and/ or interleukin-12 with a corresponding interleukin receptor in the absence and in the presence of a candidate compound which is expected to modulate the interaction of said interleukin with said receptor for a sufficient period of time so that a complex between said interleukin and said receptor can be formed,
- b) optionally separating the complex from uncomplexed fractions,
- c) detecting the complex formed in step a),
- d) determining whether there is a difference in the amount of complex formed in case a candidate compound was absent or present in step a), and
- e) choosing a candidate compound where a difference is determined in step d) as an agent.

Claim 2. (Original): The assay of claim 1, wherein the receptor is the interleukin-23 p19 receptor and/or the interleukin-12 p40 receptor.

Claim 3. (Currently amended): The assay of ~~any one of claims 1 or 2~~, wherein the receptor is fused to an immunoglobulin or a fragment thereof.

Claim 4. (Currently amended): The assay of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein

- the interleukin is interleukin-23,
- the receptor is the interleukin-23 p19 receptor and/or the interleukin-12 p40 receptor.

Claim 5. (Currently amended): Assay of ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~, wherein

- the interleukin is interleukin-12,
- the receptor is the interleukin-12 p40 receptor.

Claim 6. (Original): Kit for identifying an agent that modulates the interaction of interleukin-23 and/or interleukin-12 with a corresponding receptor comprising

- a) interleukin-23 and/or interleukin-12,
- b) the interleukin-23 p19 receptor and/or the interleukin-12 p40 receptor,
- c) optionally detection means,
- d) instructions for use of said kit, and
- e) optionally a solid phase.

Claim ~~8-7~~. (Currently amended): The kit of ~~claim 7~~ claim 6, wherein said detection means comprise a label bearing interleukin-12 antibody.

Claim ~~9-8~~. (Currently amended): The kit of ~~any one of claims 7 or 8~~ claim 6, wherein the interleukin receptor is fused to an immunoglobulin or a fragment thereof.

Claim ~~10-9~~. (Currently amended): An agent identified by an assay of ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~.

Claim ~~11-10~~. (Canceled)

Claim ~~12-11~~. (Canceled)

Claim ~~13-12~~. (Currently amended): Pharmaceutical composition comprising an agent of ~~claim 10~~ claim 9 and beside at least one pharmaceutical excipient.

Claim ~~14-13~~. (Canceled)

Claim ~~15-14~~. (Currently amended): Method for determining whether a receptor is specific for interleukin-23 or interleukin-12 or both or none, comprising

- a) providing a receptor,
- b) contacting interleukin-23 with the receptor of step a) for a sufficient period of time so that a complex between said interleukin and said receptor can be formed,
- c) contacting interleukin-12 with the receptor of step a) for a sufficient period of time so that a complex between said interleukin and said receptor can be formed,
- d) optionally separating the complex formed in step b) and/or c) from uncomplexed fractions,
- e) detecting the complex formed in step b) and/or in step c) with detection means,
- f) determining whether the receptor is
 - specific for interleukin-23, which is the case if
 - a complex formation of step b) and

- no complex formation of step c) is detected, or
- specific for interleukin-12, which is the case if
 - a complex formation of step c) and
 - no complex formation of step b) is detected, or
- specific for both interleukin-23 and interleukin-12, which is the case if
 - a complex formation of step b), and
 - a complex formation of step c) is detected, or
- unspecific for interleukin-23 and interleukin-12, which is the case if
 - no complex formation of step b), and
 - no complex formation of step c) is detected.